

MEMORANDUM

County of Placer Planning Department

HEARING DATE: September 23, 2004

ITEM NO.:

TIME: 10:30 a.m.

TO: Placer County Planning Commission

FROM: Development Review Committee

DATE: September 8, 2004

SUBJECT: BICKFORD RANCH - SPECIFIC PLAN AND DEVELOPMENT AGREEMENT, (SPA-002/DAG-013), Previously-Certified EIR and Current EIR Addendum

GENERAL PLAN DESIGNATION: Rural Residential, 1-10 acre minimum. (Special discussion regarding Boulder Ridge Specific Plan)

STAFF PLANNER:

Gina Langford, Principal Planner

LOCATION:

The project site comprises 1,942 acres and is located four miles west of I-80 and south of State Route (SR)193 between Lincoln, Penryn, and Newcastle areas. The site is generally bounded by SR193 to the north, Union Pacific Railroad to the south, a 300' tall communications tower to the east, and Sierra College Blvd. to the west. The site extends approximately four miles from the project's westerly border on Sierra College Blvd. to its easterly border.

The Union Pacific Railroad passes beneath Boulder Ridge in the southeast portion of the site through Clark Tunnel. Clover Valley Reservoir and Clover Valley Creek are located near the project's southern boundary. Clark Tunnel Road currently provides access to the site. Two existing houses and associated out-buildings are located on two large rural parcels (+10 acres each) within the project boundaries, but are not a part of the proposed project.

APPLICANT:

Bickford Holdings, LLC

PUBLIC NOTICES AND REFERRAL FOR COMMENTS:

Public notices were mailed to property owners of record within 600' of the project site. Other public interest groups and citizens were sent copies of the public hearing notice including all those who submitted letters regarding the EIR. The Departments of Public Works, Environmental Health, Air Pollution Control District, Flood Control, Facility Services, Emergency Services and CEO were transmitted copies of the project plans and application for review and comment. All comments received have been addressed within this report.

The Penryn Municipal Advisory Council (MAC) considered the proposed project on September 13, 2004. The MAC voted to _____ the project.

EXISTING LAND USE AND ZONING:

	<u>Land Use</u>	<u>General Plan</u>	<u>Zoning</u>
SITE	undeveloped/2 existing homesites	RR (1-10ac)	F-DR-B-X(10&20 ac minimum)
NORTH	rural res./pasture/orchards	AG/ Timber (10 ac.)/RR(1-10 AC)	F-B-X(4.6 & 10 ac minimum),
SOUTH	City of Rocklin/Penryn-rural res., agricultural	HB/PCP/RR (1-10 ac)	F-B-X(10 ac minimum) RA-B-X(10 ac)
EAST	rural res./orchards	RR (1-10 ac)	F-B-X(4.6 minimum)
WEST	rural res./City of Lincoln (12 Bridges)	AG/Timber (10 ac)	F-B-X (10 ac minimum)

The project site is located in a predominantly rural residential and agricultural area. North of the site and along SR193 are many small ranchettes and hobby farms with pastures for grazing a variety of livestock. Land to the northeast is used primarily for orchards and Christmas tree production. Grazing occurs on the slopes of the ravine along Clark Tunnel Road, south of SR193. The Whittington Hill Subdivision and scattered rural parcels are interspersed throughout this agricultural area.

Bitterroot Restorations, a wholesale native plant nursery, is located on a 10-acre parcel at the northwestern corner of the site at the intersection of SR193 and Sierra College Blvd. Fowler's Nursery is another wholesale nursery located on the northside of SR193 near the project site.

The existing community of Penryn lies south of the Bickford Ranch project, and is characterized mainly by rural residences and small scale agricultural operations.

The Catta Verdera Golf Course (previously Twelve Bridges) is located immediately west of the site on Sierra College Blvd. This golf course is part of a 4,500-acre master planned community within the City of Lincoln's Twelve Bridges Specific Plan.

The area immediately southwest of Bickford Ranch on the west side of Sierra College Blvd. falls within the sphere of influence of the City of Rocklin. The Clover Valley Lakes Master Planned Community has been approved for low and medium density residential development within the City limits.

SITE CHARACTERISTICS:

The project site is located in a rural area and is characterized by two broad ridges in the southern half of the site, with several narrow ridges extending in a northwesterly direction. The site comprises a complex set of landforms and dramatic variations in topography which transitions from steep canyons through deep ravines, to a flat ridgetop. Slopes range from 2-30% (gentle to steep). The northwestern portion of the site consists of gently sloping hills and pastures. Elevations vary over the project site from 300' above mean sea level (MSL) at the northwest corner to 950' MSL at the eastern edge of the property. The rise in terrain occurs along a major volcanic ridge known as Boulder Ridge that extends from east to west.

The site has historically been used for cattle grazing and remains undeveloped today. The broad ridges in the southeasterly portion are sparsely vegetated with trees, grassland, and brush. The narrower ridges in the northwest have somewhat more trees with the majority of trees located along the sides of ridges, and in the valleys between ridges.

Although there are no permanent streams on the project site, there are many intermittent drainages and swales including Clover Valley Creek above Clover Valley Reservoir near the project's southern boundary. Clover Valley Creek becomes a permanent stream downstream of the reservoir at English Colony Way, outside of the project's boundaries. Two PCWA canals traverse the project including the Caperton (north) and Antelope Canals (south) that provide irrigation water to the site and downstream properties.

A 300' tall antenna tower is located near the project's eastern boundary. The tower is leased by a cable company and shared with several public agencies to provide for emergency services. The project applicant dedicated the tower site to Placer County on October 7, 2002.

GENERAL PLAN CONSISTENCY:

In August, 1994, the Board of Supervisors as part of the Countywide General Plan update, designated the Bickford Ranch site for Rural Residential uses (RR 1-10 ac/dwelling unit) and zoned the property Farm with 10 and 20-acre minimum parcel sizes. In addition, a Development Reserve combining district (F-DR-B-X) was added which requires the preparation of a specific plan for any new development proposed beyond those uses permitted by the Farm zone.

The Board considered several land use proposals at that time and determined that the Bickford Ranch site, in addition to just one other in the County (pending Placer Vineyards Specific Plan), was suitable for accommodating new large-scale communities. The Board found the topography at Bickford Ranch to be physically isolated and unique, which would allow an opportunity for development to occur on the site's plateau without spilling onto the sides of ridgelines and affecting nearby communities.

However, this was contingent upon the project satisfying a list of development standards specifically designed for the Bickford Ranch project. These standards were adopted as part of the County-wide General Plan and serve as the County's guidelines for the development of Bickford Ranch. A maximum of 1,950 dwelling units (1 du ac) and up to 14 acres of commercial uses are permitted by the General Plan. These standards require extensive open space areas be provided that protect the steep slopes of Boulder Ridge, drainageways, canals, sensitive resources, and provide buffers along major roadways and adjoining agricultural operations.

These standards also require certain urban amenities including a park and ride facility, community parks and playgrounds, public gathering areas, greenbelts, bikeways, and pedestrian trails. A mix of housing types and densities are required ranging from rural parcels to single family suburban and multi-family residential development.

Attachment B provides a summary of how the project proposes to satisfy each of the General Plan's Development Standards for Bickford Ranch. The DRC has found the project to be consistent with the Placer County General Plan and the accompanying development standards.

A General Plan must balance the competing interests of preservation and protection of the environment with the accommodation of growth within its boundaries. This is accomplished by adopting policies that are sufficiently broad to guide preservation efforts through the full range of development intensities. The Board of Supervisors must balance competing interests in their interpretation and application of General Plan policies. These policies are intended to guide a project's development and preservation efforts within the Plan's framework, as defined by the goals, objectives and land use designations for the project area.

PROPOSAL:

The Bickford Ranch project is a large scale, mixed-use planned development including 1,890 residential units of varying densities and housing types, and 9.7 acres of retail commercial/office use proposed on 1,942 acres.

A total of 37% of the site is proposed as natural open space, 16% golf course, 3% park sites, and the balance as residential and commercial development. Primary access is proposed at Sierra College Blvd. Lower Ranch Road and Bickford Ranch Road are proposed as the major internal roadways. These roads slope down from Sierra College Blvd. and then climb up to the ridgetop where sparse grasses and trees characterize the plateau.

Residential

Three distinct residential communities are proposed and named after the site's topographical features. (see Attachment B)

- **The Meadows** - located along the east side of Sierra College Blvd. below the ridge and south of SR193. This community consists of ±20 rural estate lots ranging from 3 to 10 acres (6 acres average), and will allow for equestrian uses. This area is generally level and comprises annual grassland with minimal vegetation allowing for expansive views of the site. A total of 5 small lakes will be constructed to provide detention for the project and provide for potential wildlife habitat.
- **The Ridges** - located along the sloped portions of the site above the Meadows and below the summit. Due to the significantly higher elevation of these areas compared to nearby rural residential neighborhoods and adjoining roadways, the Ridges community represents some of the most visually sensitive areas on the Bickford Ranch site. The Ridges community includes 940 lots located along the northern and southern slopes. The majority of the lots in this community are single-family detached and range from 7,500 sf to 10 acres. A total of 172 units will be attached, multi-family or town homes of which up to 106 units are proposed to be affordable to lower income households.

Access is provided from Lower Ranch Road and Bickford Ranch Road. A minor access serving 4 rural parcels is provided via English Colony Way and a road located along the north side of the railroad tracks. A total of 5 lots are separated from the main project site and located on the south side of Sierra College Blvd. within the City of Rocklin sphere of influence.

- **Heritage Ridge** - located on the top of Boulder Ridge from Sierra College Blvd. to just west of the existing antennae tower, on the south side of Bickford Ranch Road. Heritage Ridge is proposed as an age-restricted community consisting of 920 lots ranging in size from 5,000 to 15,000 square feet. This community includes an 18-hole golf course with driving range and clubhouse facilities located on 313 acres.

Commercial

A 9.7 acre Village Commercial Center is proposed at the southwest corner of Bickford Ranch and Lower Ranch Roads. This area provides for a mix of retail and office uses to serve the project's residents and minimize off-site trips to larger commercial centers. Uses anticipated for this site include a mini or specialty grocer, retail post office, dry cleaner, delicatessen, and offices for dentists, real estate sales, insurance agents, etc. Additional uses include a park and ride lot (10 spaces) with bus stops and covered benches to encourage car-pooling and a pedestrian-oriented outdoor plaza, as required by the Bickford Ranch General Plan development standards (Attachment B).

Recreation

Two public park sites are proposed including Bickford Ranch Community Park and Tower Park. Bickford Ranch Community Park comprises 57 acres and is located on the eastern edge of Sierra College Blvd. north of Lower Ranch Road, adjoining The Meadows community. The park will be split into two activity areas that are separated by passive open space that includes protected wetlands. Facilities will include group picnic shelters, baseball and soccer fields, basketball and tennis courts, and other facilities. No night lighting or loudspeakers are proposed.

Tower Park comprises 3.7 acres and is located in the far eastern portion of the site. This neighborhood park will provide a tot lot, picnic facilities, sports court and trail rest area.

A private recreation center is proposed within the Heritage Ridge community and would provide a clubhouse to serve the needs of seniors, with a separate clubhouse provided for all residents of Bickford Ranch. Proposed amenities include a fitness center, meeting and instructional areas, craft rooms, library, restaurant and other golf support facilities. Outdoor facilities include tennis courts and a swimming pool.

A golf course and driving range are also located in the Heritage Ridge community. The golf course is generally located along the edge of Boulder Ridge extending east to west from Tower Park to the project's main entrance at Sierra College Blvd. The driving range is located on the south side of Bickford Ranch Road. A golf maintenance facility is proposed near the project's entrance on Sierra College Blvd. The golf course is proposed to initially be open as a public course, but could later be converted to a private club.

A network of public multi-purpose trails are proposed throughout the Bickford Ranch project connecting to park sites, recreation centers, and open space corridors. A total of 33 miles of public trails are provided for hiking, bicycling, and equestrian users, plus pedestrian walkways.

Private trails and walkways are provided inside the Heritage Ridge community adjoining residential streets. Public trails are proposed along both sides of Bickford Ranch Road with a separate bike trail provided on one side of the roadway. Trails are also provided on one-side only along Lower Ranch Road. All public trails have been designed so that they are accessible from neighboring communities. A continuous loop trail system will be provided around the project's perimeter.

School Site

An 11.8-acre site has been reserved for a future elementary school. The site is located in The Meadows community adjacent to Bickford Ranch Park.

Fire Station

A 1-acre fire station site is proposed at the southeast corner of Bickford Ranch Park on Lower Ranch Road. The applicant proposes to construct the site and partially equip the fire station. In addition, a Sheriff's service center and a park maintenance facility will be included as part of the fire station site.

Natural Open Space

Approximately 720 acres (37% of site) of natural open space are proposed to preserve existing vegetation, steep hillsides and canyons, and provide a visual buffer between the project's developed areas and surrounding neighborhoods. These areas primarily occur within The Ridges community north of Bickford Ranch Road, and include dense oak woodlands and steep terrain. The only encroachments permitted in these areas will be oak reforestation, fire breaks, emergency vehicle access, utilities, detention ponds and trails. These areas will be owned and maintained by the Bickford Ranch Homeowner's Association with easements provided for emergency access and public trails.

Open Space Corridors

A total of 46 acres are provided in open space corridors along Bickford Ranch Road and Lower Ranch Road. These areas provide for extensive landscaping and berming (20'-100') on both sides of the roadways, and include meandering walkways that will provide a connection between the project's residential communities and the commercial center and park sites.

REQUESTED ENTITLEMENTS:

The applicant requests approval of the proposed September 1, 2004 Specific Plan, including Design Guidelines and Development Standards, and a Development Agreement (see Attachment C). The Planning Commission will review these documents together with the previously-certified EIR and an Addendum to the previously-certified EIR (as described in more detail on pages 8 thru 10), and forward their recommendations to the Board of Supervisors for final action.

Development of the project is proposed to be phased, generally occurring from the western boundary along Sierra College Boulevard, towards the eastern boundary. The project will be divided into three general phases. Residential lots, open space, recreation areas, and commercial and public facilities will be phased so that facilities are in place to serve each phase of development. The Specific Plan (Section 10.12) identifies the conceptual phasing plan for the project.

The overall site will be subdivided into large lot tentative maps to create large parcels for financing purposes. These maps will create separate parcels for residential, golf course, open

space, recreational, and commercial uses. Several small lot tentative maps will further divide these larger parcels into smaller lots for sale to individual buyers.

The Specific Plan's Development Standards also identify certain uses that will require approval of a minor use permit and subsequent Design Site Review Committee approval. Many other agencies have been or will be involved in authorizing development of the proposed project. Some of these include the Local Agency Formation Commission (fire district boundaries), Army Corps of Engineers, USFWS, and State Department of Fish and Game (biological resources), State Water Resources Control Board (water quality), and State Department of Water Resources (water and wastewater service).

The applicant proposes the formation of a Community Facilities District (CFD) to help finance the project's infrastructure and facilities costs. The Placer County Bond Screening Committee and the Board of Supervisors will consider this request as part of a separate public hearing process. Attachment I contains a summary of the proposed CFD.

SPECIFIC PLAN DOCUMENTS:

Specific Plan

The Specific Plan describes the proposed project and defines the purpose and intent for all permitted land uses within the plan area. It also identifies the entitlements necessary to allow ultimate construction of the project, and defines the methods for administering and amending the plan. The Specific Plan also includes the project's environmental mitigation measures (Appendix A) and the Development Agreement (Appendix B) which outline the specific performance standards required for the project.

Design Guidelines

The Bickford Ranch Design Guidelines contain design guidance for all land uses permitted in the Plan Area. The Guidelines also provide design concepts and intent for specific elements in the Plan Area including architectural treatments, entrances, streetscapes, intersections, and buffer areas. Where no direction is given in the Bickford Ranch Design Guidelines, the Placer County Design Guidelines, Landscape Design Guidelines, and Rural Design Guidelines will apply.

Development Standards

The Bickford Ranch Development Standards regulate the location, design and development of land uses within the project area. The purpose of the Development Standards is to ensure that development within the project is consistent with Specific Plan goals and policies, as well as ensuring that all development complies with the applicable Placer County Zoning and Subdivision Ordinances. Development standards are provided for residential, commercial, and open space land uses, circulation, parking, noise, safety, site development/grading, utilities, signage, air quality, storage, and lighting. The Development Standards are adopted by ordinance and will supercede the provisions of the Placer County Zoning Ordinance unless otherwise stated.

CEQA COMPLIANCE:

The Placer County Board of Supervisors certified the Bickford Ranch EIR on December 18, 2001. The Bickford EIR analyzed the impacts of the project as described in the proposed Bickford Ranch Specific Plan, Development Standards, and Design Guidelines, dated August 17, 1999. It also analyzed certain modifications described in Chapter 2.0 of the EIR dated November 13, 2000. The Bickford EIR was certified by the Placer County Board of Supervisors (Resolution No. 2001-340)

on December 18, 2001, at which time the Board also approved the Bickford Ranch Specific Plan, Development Standards and Design Guidelines. The Board also adopted a Statement of Findings, a Mitigation Monitoring Plan and a Statement of Overriding Considerations for the Bickford Ranch Specific Plan Project, including related entitlements, and a Development Agreement, after requiring changes to the project to reduce its environmental impacts. The Board's action requiring changes to the project did not result in new or greater environmental impacts than those impacts identified and analyzed in the Bickford EIR. The Board also adopted resolutions dealing with abandonment of one portion and closure of two other portions of Clark Tunnel Road. On October 21, 2003, the Board approved tentative maps for the project.

All of the foregoing actions were challenged in court. The Court determined that the Board's certification of the Bickford EIR was valid, but its approval of the Specific Plan, Design Guidelines, Development Standards, Development Agreement, adoption of mitigation measures, and the Mitigation Monitoring and Reporting Plan and resolutions pertaining to Clark Tunnel Road were invalid and consequently, ordered those actions to be rescinded. The judge ruled that the versions of the specific Plan in the Administrative Record were uncertain because the final plan (as modified by the Board) was not originally included in the record. However, the Court determined that the Bickford Ranch EIR was adequate and did not order its certification rescinded. The Court also dismissed the challenges to the Bickford Ranch tentative maps.

On August 10, 2004 the Board complied with the Court's writ by rescinding its approval of the Specific Plan, Design Guidelines, Development Standards, Development Agreement, adoption of mitigation measures, Mitigation Monitoring and Reporting Plan, and the resolutions pertaining to Clark Tunnel Road. The Planning Commission and Board of Supervisors may now reconsider adoption of the Specific Plan, Design Guidelines, Development Standards, Development Agreement, and the resolutions pertaining to Clark Tunnel Road. The previously-certified Bickford Ranch EIR, together with an EIR Addendum has been prepared in compliance with CEQA requirements, permit the Planning Commission and Board of Supervisors to consider such actions.

The EIR Addendum addresses the changes between the project evaluated in the certified EIR and the project described in the Specific Plan dated September 1, 2004, as well as other changes that have occurred with the passage of time. CEQA Guidelines Section 15164 requires preparation of an Addendum to a previously certified EIR where "...some changes or additions are necessary but none of the conditions described in CEQA Section 15162 calling for preparation of a subsequent EIR has occurred."

The EIR Addendum addresses the following project changes that were not considered in the previously-certified Bickford Ranch EIR.

- 1) Project changes made by the Applicant subsequent to completion of the Bickford EIR to reduce environmental impacts by reducing the project footprint, presented to the Placer County Planning Commission and Board of Supervisors in 2001. The currently proposed Bickford Ranch Specific Plan, Development Standards, and Design Guidelines dated September 1, 2004 were prepared to document these changes.

- 2) Project changes required by the Board of Supervisors (Resolution No. 2001-340) to reduce or eliminate environmental impacts of the proposed project. The currently proposed Bickford Ranch Specific Plan, Development Standards, and Design Guidelines dated September 1, 2004 to document these changes.

3) Changes in site conditions related to implementation of certain mitigation, initiation of site preparation activities, and agency input and actions, including:

a) Water conveyance modifications proposed by the Applicant as part of their execution of a Water Master Facilities Agreement to serve the project with the Placer County Water Agency (PCWA).

b) Minor Master Lotting Plan changes documented in the Tentative Maps for the project which were approved on October 21, 2003.

c) Three additional minor lotting plan and golf course alignment modifications for the Heritage Ridge Community described in Applicant's letter to Placer County dated November 21, 2003 (see Attachment E).

In addition to the above project changes, the EIR Addendum describes other changes resulting from new development occurring in the surrounding region both in Placer County and nearby cities, since the Draft EIR was prepared.

The Master Lotting Plan evaluated in the Draft EIR (DEIR) proposed 1,950 residential units. During preparation of the Final EIR (FEIR), the applicant modified the Plan in response to public comments received on the DEIR. These changes generally included: 1) adding a school reservation site, 2) revising the trail plan, 3) expanding facilities at Bickford Ranch Park and Tower Park, 4) deleting the Village Recreation Center, 5) adding 40 multi-family units, 6) relocating the water tank per PCWA's request, 7) recognizing Bitterroot Nursery as a permanent use, and 8) providing an open view fence along all lots adjoining natural open space areas.

On June 22, 2001, after the FEIR was released, the applicant further refined the project's proposed design to include the following :

1. Residential Density - The number of residential units have been reduced to 1890 units.
2. Ridges Development - Residential lots in areas R7, 8, 9 have been reduced in size and pulled back up off the ridgelines, and condensed on the ridgetops. The ridgetops are proposed to be mass graded where previously they were to be non-graded lots.
3. Driving Range - The golf driving range was relocated out of a deep ravine on the north side of Bickford Ranch Road, to the south side of the road within the Heritage Ridge Community.
4. Affordable Housing - The project will provide 189 affordable units, consistent with the requirement for 10% affordable housing. A minimum of 90 and up to 106 affordable units will be constructed on-site with the balance to be constructed off-site.
5. Communications Tower - The tower site has been expanded to provide a 300' radius around the tower for security purposes.
6. Commercial Site - The Village Commercial site has been increased from 7.9 to 9.7 acres and will now include a mix of retail and office uses.

7. Golf Clubhouse - A clubhouse/recreation center is added to provide a facility exclusively for Heritage Ridge residents, and a separate facility for all Bickford Ranch residents.

The staff has reviewed all of the above design modifications and have determined that no new or more significant impacts result from any of the proposed changes. Relocating the driving range out of the ravine, and pulling lots back off the ridgeline towards the ridgetop results in a net decrease in tree loss. This is true even considering the additional pad grading proposed for the reconfigured lots. These changes are also beneficial to wildlife resources by reducing the overall development area north of Bickford Ranch Road. This provides for a greater amount of contiguous habitat areas and a corresponding reduction in oak woodland removal along the ridgelines, which helps facilitate wildlife migration.

ANALYSIS:

Oak Woodland

The project site contains approximately 78,700 native trees (6" dbh) including mostly blue oak, but also interior live oak and valley oaks (95%). Development of the project will remove approximately 10,000 oak trees (ultimate home site construction) of which approximately 25% will be removed due to poor health. An additional 60 native trees will be impacted due to installation of an off-site PCWA water supply pipeline.

The applicant proposes to mitigate for tree loss by implementing the Bickford Ranch Oak Forest and Conservation Plan which replaces tree loss at a 2:1 ratio, or approximately 21,000 new oak trees. Reforestation will occur throughout open space areas, park sites, and around the golf course maintenance facility. The reforestation plan proposes oak replacement utilizing 100% acorn and seedling plants. Additional oak trees of varying sizes comprising 5 gallon, 15 gallon, and 24" box trees will be planted on-site to provide for a more immediate, visual replacement of oak canopy loss.

Visual Resources

The project site consists of gently rolling hills with abrupt slopes transitioning to the top of relatively flat ridges. The flat ridge tops and rolling hills are covered with annual grassland, and the steep ridge slopes, valleys, and drainages are covered with extensive oak woodlands.

The project was designed to generally avoid skylining which would result if new homes were allowed to silhouette against the sky above ridgelines or hilltops. This was accomplished by restricting development from encroaching too far onto the ridgelines, maintaining existing vegetation and tree canopies within open spaces areas, and limiting the height and colors of new structures.

Several locations within the communities surrounding Bickford Ranch were selected as being representative of typical public vantage points for viewing the Bickford Ranch project and are included in the EIR. These include: 1) Sierra College Blvd. at Indian Oaks Drive - open, expansive views of the Meadows area, 2) Sierra College Blvd. at English Colony Way - view of The Ridges development from highly traveled local roadways southwest of the site, 3) Frontier Court - representative of a typical view from within the Penryn Community, 4) SR193 at Walters Ranch Road - representative of a typical viewing condition from areas north of the proposed project, and 5)

Twelve Bridges Road- representative of views from Lincoln's Twelve Bridges project as traveling towards Sierra College Blvd.

Views of the site from locations along SR193 are expected to be minimal due to the steep terrain and dense oak woodlands existing along the side slopes and ridge edges. Views of the Meadows area from Sierra College Blvd. will be open and expansive. However large rural parcels are proposed in this area that will be compatible with existing development in the surrounding communities.

Views from the Penryn Community and east of the site are highly variable due to the extent of existing vegetative screening, and topographic changes (undulating hills). As such, the project was designed to maintain substantial natural open space areas along the far easterly and southeasterly borders where native vegetation and mature tree canopy are also very limited. Although development will be visible from these areas, the project will be screened by existing tree canopy and limitations placed on building heights, coloring, and location of building envelopes; and the planting of new trees. These steps will help to ensure that new structures are visually subordinate to the existing natural landscape.

Wetlands and Riparian Vegetation

Approximately 17 acres of wetlands and intermittent drainages exist on the project site. Additional wetlands are located off-site within the PCWA water supply pipeline alignment near Swetzer and Butler Roads in Penryn. Several small vernal pools (.23 acres) are located primarily along the ridge near the tower site, just east of Clark Tunnel Road.

Construction of the project will impact approximately 2.6 acres of wetlands and .23 acres of vernal pools. The applicant proposes to replace all impacted wetlands on-site, primarily within open space areas within The Meadows community at a 3:1 ratio, or 8.5 acres. All wetland areas will be protected within wetland preservation easements located near the new community park site. In addition, 5 small lakes will be constructed in The Meadows community to provide for on-site detention for the project which will include emergent marsh wetlands along the lakes' fringes.

Vernal pool mitigation is proposed to occur offsite at a County approved mitigation bank site. Approximately 70 acres of riparian vegetation exists throughout the site which will be generally protected within the project's natural open space areas. Riparian vegetation is found along Clover Valley Creek downstream of the reservoir, adjacent to steep slopes, and at the bottoms of steep ravines.

Development of the project will impact approximately 5 acres of riparian vegetation, primarily due to construction of the lakes and detention ponds. All impacts to riparian vegetation will be mitigated on-site as part of implementing the proposed Oak Woodland Conservation and Revegetation Plan and Wetlands Preservation and Impact plan.

Gates

The applicant proposes to install 4 access control gates along the south side of Bickford Ranch Road. The gates will be located at the entry to neighborhoods located within the Heritage Ridge Community.

Schools

The Plan Area is served by three school districts for grades K-8 including the Western Placer Unified School District, Penryn Elementary School District, and the Loomis Union School District. The Western Placer Unified School District and the Placer Union High School District serve the Plan Area for grades 9-12.

An 11-acre site has been reserved for a future school site in the event it is needed. The site is within the Loomis Unified School District and part of The Meadows community located adjacent to Bickford Ranch Park.

The school site will be reserved pursuant to the California Government Code and based on the terms of the proposed development agreement. The applicant is working with the three elementary school districts to adjust the district boundaries so that a single district provides service for the entire Bickford Ranch project. This will allow children within the project to attend the same school.

Fire Protection

Two fire protection entities serve the project site. The California Department of Forestry and Fire Protection (CDF) provides wildland fire protection for the entire Plan Area. On March 13, 2002, the Placer County LAFCO adopted a resolution which placed all structural areas within the plan area under the responsibility of the Placer County Fire Department (managed by CDF). A one-acre fire station site will be located at the southeast corner of Bickford Ranch Community Park.

Transportation/Circulation

Attachment G shows the street circulation system surrounding the project, while Attachment H depicts the on-site street circulation system. The applicant proposes to provide access to the project entirely off of Sierra College Blvd. Primary access will be provided via Bickford Ranch Road, which begins at Sierra College Blvd. and travels to the east. Bickford Ranch Road will be four lanes (two lanes in each direction) between Sierra College Blvd. and Lower Ranch Road, and then transition to two lanes east of Lower Ranch Road.

Lower Ranch Road would provide secondary access into the plan area from Sierra College Blvd. approximately 6,600 feet north of Bickford Ranch Road. A third access is also proposed off Sierra College Blvd. approximately 1,800 feet north of the Sierra College Blvd./Lower Ranch Road intersection. This roadway will serve some of the Meadows community, Bickford Ranch Park North, and the reserved school site.

Clark Tunnel Road currently extends through the project site between SR193 on the north and English Colony Way on the south. The segment between the south boundary of the project site and SR193 is currently unpaved, while the segment south of the project is paved with steep grades and sharp curves. The applicant proposes to install gates on Clark Tunnel Road at the north and south project boundaries to prohibit vehicular access, but allow for emergency vehicle access. These gates would prohibit travel along Clark Tunnel Road between Penryn and SR193. On the segment of Clark Tunnel Road between the northern project boundary and SR193, the project proposes to convert the roadway to a public multi-purpose trail primarily for equestrian/pedestrian and bicycle use.

The project is expected to generate approximately 13,000 daily vehicular trips external to the project site. Both the morning and afternoon peak hours are projected to generate 1,000 off-site vehicular trips each. Off-site impacts will be mitigated by paying traffic impact fees and constructing specific improvements identified below:

Standard Countywide Traffic Impact Fees – Approximately \$1.9 million will be collected from Countywide traffic impact fees and paid at the issuance of individual building permits. This amount will contribute towards transportation improvements included in the Capital Improvement Programs for the surrounding area, such as English Colony Way, Taylor Road, etc, but does not include improvements to Sierra College Blvd.

Regional Traffic Impact Fees - Approximately \$2.5 million will be collected for regional traffic impacts, which will contribute towards transportation improvements such as Sierra College Boulevard. These fees are collected by Placer County for the South Placer Regional Transportation Authority (SPRTA), a regional Joint Powers Authority (JPA) that includes the Cities of Rocklin, Roseville, and Lincoln, and Placer County. SPRTA was created in 2002 by the parties to the JPA as a regional entity to collect funds for transportation improvements that are regional in nature. Improvements to Sierra College Boulevard between SR 193 and the Sacramento County line are included in the capital improvement program funded by fees collected by SPRTA. Fees vary by district in Placer County and the Cities. For the Bickford Ranch area, SPRTA fees are presently \$2,231 per dwelling unit equivalent.

Additional Fees - An additional \$1.68 million will go towards transportation improvements included in the Capital Improvement Programs for the surrounding area described above under "Standard Countywide Traffic Impact Fees." An additional \$1.27 million will fund improvements to Sierra College Blvd.

Special Transportation Fund – The Department of Public Works requested and the project applicant agreed to a Special Transportation Fund in the amount of \$1,000,000 to be applied towards improvements to benefit the roadway infrastructure surrounding the Bickford Ranch project. A list of potential improvements is included in Attachment M.

English Colony Way – The applicant has agreed to advance \$600,000 to the County for improvements to English Colony Way. These improvements include shoulder widening to English Colony Way between Sierra College Boulevard and Taylor Road, and improvements to enhance the safety and traffic operations at the one-lane subway under the Union Pacific Railroad tracks. Improvements to the subway may include flashing beacons on the approaches, subway lighting, reflectorized markers in the subway and pavement improvements. Payment would occur prior to approval of the final map that creates the 1,100th residential unit and would be credited toward standard countywide traffic fees.

Sierra College Boulevard - The project applicant will fully fund and construct a traffic signal and related roadway improvements at the intersection of Sierra College Blvd. and SR193. This signal will be constructed with the first phase of the project. The project will also construct an additional lane on Sierra College Blvd. along the entire length of their frontage. This additional lane will be ± 2 miles long and will provide passing opportunities for southbound travelers on the uphill section of Sierra College between SR193 and the project's southern boundary. Additional widening will be necessary at intersections to accommodate turn lanes in and out of intersections serving the Bickford Ranch project.

Grading

The project site comprises moderate to steep (+ 30%) terrain. Most of the grading and earthwork will occur south of Bickford Ranch Road. The project will require grading for the 18-hole golf

course, streets, driveways and individual building foundations. Grading for residential areas will be divided into Type A and Type B lots. Type A lots limit the area of soil disturbance to driveways, utilities, drainage facilities and structure foundations, while with Type B lots the entire lot area is subject to soil disturbance and tree removal. Grading will also include trenching for installation of utilities (i.e., water, sanitary sewer, natural gas, storm drainage, electrical, telephone and cable TV lines, etc.). An estimated four (4) million cubic yards of earth will be moved on-site for the development of the project.

Substantial grading will occur in the Heritage Ridge Community, golf course, Village Commercial site, and the Clubhouse/Recreation Center sites. It is planned that all excavated material will be used on-site. The project is expected to balance cuts and fills, and will not require exportation of cut material or importation of fill materials, except for roadway work. The average cuts and fills are expected to be between six and eight feet, although isolated cuts and fills may exceed twenty +/- feet.

Five lakes will be excavated in The Meadows community and will generate soil for placement on the golf course and landscaped areas. This excavation will occur in the first phase prior to road construction.

Storm Drainage and Water Quality

The proposed project is tributary to four watersheds: Auburn Ravine, Clover Valley Creek, Ingram Slough, and Dutch Ravine. The majority of the site ($\pm 1,050$ acres) drains to Auburn Ravine. The remainder of the site drains into Ingram Slough (± 200 acres), a tributary of Auburn Ravine; and Clover Valley Creek (625 acres), a tributary of Dry Creek. The site also drains to Dutch Ravine, which is also a tributary of Auburn Ravine.

The proposed project provides for storm drain improvements within each community development. All structures and/or facilities will be designed in accordance with the County's Storm Water Management Manual. Detention facilities are proposed to meet the Storm Water Management Manual detention requirements of reducing runoff from the site to 90 percent of the pre-development runoff rate. The proposed facilities include ravine detention ponds, excavated detention ponds and lakes.

The grading and earthwork involved in preparing the project site for construction will result in a temporary loss of vegetative cover. This loss of vegetation will increase the potential for soil erosion and an increase in suspended solids in the stormwater runoff. The applicant will prepare an erosion control plan in accordance with the County's Grading Ordinance requirements and secure an NPDES General Permit for Discharge of Storm Water Associated with Construction Activities. In order to obtain the NPDES permit, the applicant has prepared a site-specific Storm Water Pollution Prevention Plan (SWPPP). The erosion control plan and the SWPPP contain specific measures including Best Management Practices (BMP's) to control erosion and minimize sediment discharges in runoff during construction. Structural or permanent BMP's will be constructed as part of the project's site improvements to maintain water quality after construction. Monitoring wells will be installed in each of the three northern drainage sheds. Ongoing monitoring of the wells will be the responsibility of the Homeowners Association.

Wastewater

Bickford Ranch proposes a public sewer system that includes a series of gravity sewer pipes generally running from east to west and then flowing north on Sierra College Blvd. to the

intersection with SR193. The pipes will be sized to handle the sewage flow from the entire project plus the sewage flow from the Newcastle Sanitary District. A County Service Area (CSA) will be formed to provide operation and maintenance of all sewer lines within the development.

The developers of Bickford Ranch have received preliminary approval from the City of Lincoln to have wastewater treated at the City's plant. A formal agreement between the City and Placer County will need to be negotiated and signed before sewer service can be provided.

A Joint Powers Authority has been formed between Placer County, the Cities of Lincoln and Auburn, Newcastle Sanitary District, South Placer Municipal Utility District, and Nevada County to develop a regional sewer system. This system would accommodate the wastewater flows from all of the above entities at the Lincoln Regional Wastewater Treatment Plant and thus allow for the abandonment of the existing wastewater treatment plants at Lake of the Pines, Auburn and Newcastle. The applicant has agreed to enlarge the proposed sewer line that will run from Sierra College Blvd. and SR193 to the Lincoln plant, which will carry the combined sewage flows from those agencies.

The Bickford Ranch site allows for most of the project to be served with gravity flow sewers. However, some areas will require lift stations. The on-site wastewater conveyance system would consist of ten small lift stations for the ridge tops connecting with gravity flow pipes at the northwest corner of the project near Sierra College Blvd. and SR193, following most of the street alignments. Individual on-site sewage disposal systems will be used on 15 large rural residential parcels. Soils testing for these lots has been completed to determine on-site capability.

Water Supply

The project will utilize treated water from the Placer County Water Agency (PCWA) and irrigation water from PCWA's Antelope and Caperton Canals. The project proposes new residential and commercial development which will increase on-site water consumption by an estimated 2.3 mgd (million gallons/day). PCWA irrigation water will be used for all landscape and golf course areas.

Since the Bickford Ranch project was considered in 2001, an EIR for PCWA's American River Pump Station was certified in 2002 and a contract with the U.S. Bureau of Reclamation for construction of the American River Pump Station was approved. Drawings and technical specifications for Phase 1 of the pump station were approved (August 2002) and construction has commenced, as anticipated in the Bickford Ranch EIR. Phase 2 of the pump station project is scheduled to go out to bid within the next several months. Phase 2 includes river restoration, construction of recreational elements and the diversion structure for the pump station. Both phases of the pump station are scheduled for completion in late 2005. The new intakes are currently planned for completion by early 2007 and the new pump station will be fully operational after April 2007.

The same 15 parcels identified above to be served with on-site sewage disposal systems will also be served by individual domestic water wells.

Noise

On-Site - Portions of the site are exposed to noise from traffic on Sierra College Blvd. and railroad trains. Traffic along interior roadways and activity from commercial/recreational facilities are also considered potential noise generating sources.

The project noise study concluded that railroad noise has limited impact on adjacent lots due to the site's overall topographical features. Approximately 8 lots will require notification to future owners that noise levels will be within the conditionally acceptable range of 65dB. Sierra College Blvd. noise is mitigated through distance of lots from the roadway. Lots next to Bickford Ranch Road, specifically along the ridges, could be exposed to noise levels exceeding 60dB at outdoor activity areas, and may incorporate sound walls to reduce noise levels to community standards.

Off-site

Although the Bickford Ranch project will generate increases in traffic noise, the increases are very minor (1 db) and not considered significant. The project's traffic noise contribution is also within the acceptable range expected by buildout of the Placer County General Plan. A few existing homes are located adjacent to or near Sierra College Boulevard and SR 193 that will be exposed to over 60 db noise levels. However this is a result of buildout of the surrounding community and not attributable to the Bickford Ranch project.

Water quality

The project will implement a Chemical Application Management Plan for the golf course that: details turf management practices, plans for storage and use of chemicals, identifies methods for controlling potential surface water quality impacts due to runoff contamination, and include a plan for surface water quality monitoring to document the outcome of the program and provide information regarding changes to the program that may be needed. On-going monitoring and oversight will be required.

Ground Water

The EIR found that most of the upper surface of Boulder Ridge is covered by a half cemented Volcanic mud flow which allows for very low permeability. Therefore, the potential for groundwater recharge is relatively low. Groundwater is only expected to occur in weathered granite and fractures within the bedrock.

In addition, some limited seasonal springs have been observed along the slopes of the main ridge that would indicate that any minor recharge that may occur is hitting rock and moving horizontally into springs.

Mines

Prospecting and limited mining activities have occurred on the site prior to 1925. Seven sites showing evidence of past mining activity have been identified. The applicant has contracted with the California Department of Toxic Substances Control (DTSC) to review and make recommendations on potential hazards posed by past mining activities. The developer has agreed to participate in a voluntary cleanup program of an old abandoned mine site as recommended by the DTSC, and is progressing through that program. The department has determined no cleanup is needed as long as the mine site remains in separate open space areas with recorded deed restrictions.

Air Quality

The environmental review process for the Bickford Ranch project identified numerous local and regional air quality impacts resulting from a substantial increase in vehicular, fireplace, and open burning emissions, as well as dust and diesel emissions from construction activity. Regional issues include the project's impact on the County's existing severe non-attainment designation for health based ozone standards, and the impact on the Air Pollution Control District's ability to attain these standards by 2005.

To mitigate these air quality impacts, the applicant has proposed on-site and off-site measures. On-site, the applicant has included a mixed use commercial area, numerous recreational opportunities, prohibition of backyard burning and woodburning fireplaces, use of battery powered or electric landscape maintenance equipment, use of ozone destruction catalyst in air conditioning units and the use of electric golf carts on internal streets.

Offsite, the applicant has agreed to participate in the District's off-site air quality mitigation program. The applicant will pay into this fund approximately \$415,000 for the District to use to reduce air pollution from sources within Placer County and the Sacramento Valley Air Basin that are not required by law to reduce their emissions.

RECOMMENDATION:

The Development Review Committee (DRC) supports the Planning Commission forwarding a favorable recommendation to the Board of Supervisors for adoption of the Bickford Ranch Specific Plan. The Development Review Committee (DRC) recommends: 1) consideration of the previously-certified Bickford Ranch EIR together with the EIR Addendum, 2) recommendation to the Board for approval of the Bickford Ranch Specific Plan, including Design Guidelines and Development Standards, 3) recommendation to the Board for approval of the proposed Development Agreement, and 4) recommendation to the Board for approval of closures and partial abandonment of Clark Tunnel Road, all subject to the findings contained in Attachments H and I.

Respectfully submitted,

Gina Langford, Principal Planner

ATTACHMENTS:

Attachment A - Land Use Summary Table

Attachment B - General Plan Consistency Table

Attachment C - Development Agreement Summary

Attachment D - Regional Circulation Plan

Attachment E- Local Circulation Plan

Attachment F - PCWA letter- SB221 Water Supply Sufficiency Verification, 5/19/03

Attachment G - Draft Resolution- Final EIR and EIR Addendum

Attachment H - Draft Resolutions for Bickford Ranch Project Approval

1. Specific Plan and Design Guidelines
2. Abandonment of Clark Tunnel Road (portion)
3. Closure and Barricading of Northern Portion of Clark Tunnel Road
4. Closure and Barricading of Southern Portion of Clark Tunnel Road

Attachment I - Draft Ordinances for Bickford Ranch Project Approval

1. Development Standards
2. Development Agreement

Under Separate Cover:

Specific Plan (includes Development Agreement)

Design Guidelines

Development Standards

Final EIR
EIR Addendum

cc: George Phillips - Applicant
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Supervisor White
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John Marin - Board of Supervisors Office
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Allison Carlos - CEO
Roger Davies - Environmental Health Department
Dave Vintze - Air Pollution Control District
Vance Kimbrel - Parks Department
Valerie Flood - County Counsel
Facility Services
Mike Boyle - Office Emergency Services
Greg Guyan – CDF
Anthony LaBouf - County Counsel
MACs - Newcastle/Ophir, Penryn Rural Lincoln MACS
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Gig Powers, LUSD
Anita Yoder, Public Information Office
Denise Heick, URS
Kathy Kerdus, Town of Loomis
City of Lincoln
Terry Richardson - City of Rocklin Community Development Dept.
Terry Davis - Sierra Club
Penryn Unified School District
West Placer Unified School District
Mal Toy, PCWA
Army Corps of Engineers
DFG
USFWS
WPCARE
California Oaks Foundation
Audubon Society
Subject file